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The Knoxville News-Sentinel

April 16, 1997

Dear Mr. Weisberg,

As you probably recall, I spoke and then visited with you a few years ago in connection with Albert Osborne/John Howard Bowen, the one-time Knoxville man who was later Oswald's seatmate on the bus trip to Mexico, and whose suspicious activities, coupled with the FBI's peculiar behavior about him, are just one of the many sub-mysteries of the JFK case.

I was "cruising the internet" the other day, and stumbled (literally stumbled, I am struggling mightily to become functional on the computer) onto an electronic bulletin board notice of your 84th birthday. I wish I had seen that earlier so I could have written this letter in time for it to reach you on or before your birthday.

Anyway, belatedly, I want to wish you a very happy birthday, Mr. Weisberg. And more importantly, as a fellow American citizen, I want to thank you for the great service I believe you have done to help salvage the honest history of President Kennedy's assassination. I believe you deserve much wider recognition than you have received for your pioneering, independent study and research of the official story. I admire your courage and perseverance in a time when few dared question, and virtually no one dared criticize, sacred icons such as the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover and Earl Warren.

As a journalist, I especially admire and appreciate what you have done, and I am painfully aware and very ashamed of how the so-called "major league" reporters of the national press corps generally ignored or distorted your work, and bungled, mishandled and ignored the JFK assassination story. I am at a complete and utter loss to explain it, other than to guess that it may in part be because they did not want to acknowledge that you were doing the job that they should have been doing!



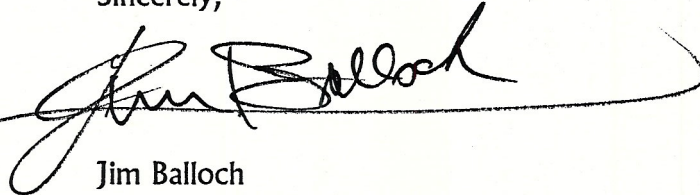
A SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWSPAPER

Incidentally, I am currently reading "Never Again," and recently completed "Case Closed." I noticed your reference to Jellico, Tenn., which is not far from here, as a source during your senate committee investigation days for, ahem, certain invigorating beverages, the acquisition and transportation of which the local law never seemed to interfere with. No doubt! It was probably the sheriff's cousin who was making the stuff, and his cousin or brother-in-law who was selling it! A grand old tradition, once practiced from one end of Dixie to the other.

Well, anyway, thanks again for all that you have done, and for your earlier help to me in my very minor contribution to the history of the JFK case.

I may be up in the D.C./College park area this summer. If so, and if it is convenient for you, I might like to drop by and see you again. I will of course contact you ahead of time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Balloch", with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the bottom left of the signature.

Jim Balloch

Mr. Jim Balloch
The Knoxville News-Sentinel
203 W. Church Ave.,
Knoxville, TN 37902

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

Dear Mr. Balloch,

Yes, I remember, and many thanks for your letter we do appreciate.

If you get up this summer you'll be welcome.

I was a rum-runner in the official DJ Buick but I never put any bootleg whiskey in it. I ^{bought} ~~bought~~ it branded, legal stuff in either Lexington or Jellico.

Where I got the bootleg stuff was at LaFollete, when I was fishing at Morris Lake. It was corn and I [&] ~~developed~~ developed a taste for corn. No official car involved.

Last place we lived in the Washington area about the end of World War II was in Virginia, which had state liquor stores and ration cards. I bought bonded bourbon for our guests and for myself bought the most honestly labelled corn whiskey, Singin' Sam. The label said the whiskey in this bottle in warranted to be not over 30 days old.

Once I did get bootleg that was not only made for the sheriff but was made in his jail. Had a friend who was dating a man who was a pal of the sheriff in I think Marion. When he heard that I like corn he ^{said} ~~said~~ he also needed some so he'd have it made! He had the right guy in jail. She sent it to me with a friend who was visiting her down there.

Reminds me.

When I worked for the Senate John Garner was vice president. He had an official car and a chauffeur. Twice a week he sent ~~his~~ his driver to West

Virginia with two large picnic baskets. Each held as I recall two gallon ^{ugs} ~~ugs~~ under the large napkin. Garner kept them on a book case in his office. Before long they ^{were} ~~were~~ marked with rings as the whiskey that was wasted dribbled down. Eventually he gave it back to the building carpenters and when I needed a book case, with their ^{ap} ~~ap~~ologies I was offered it as faster than having one made. Galley/cover those rings anyway.

I had a ~~par~~ proofread I'd borrowed from the government printing office, good old country boy from Independence, MO. Before long he was ^N ~~was~~ later and later getting back from lunch and fortunately I checked his work, which was getting sloppier and sloppier. He met Garner on an elevator, Garner invited him to bend his elbow, and it got to be daily. Had to send him back after once having to send him to a Turkish bath and then home.

Best, Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg